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APRIL 1, 2022 | VOLUME 13 | ISSUE 7

YOUR DONATION BENEFITS THE VENDORS.
PLEASE BUY ONLY FROM BADGED VENDORS.

Judge Ketanji Brown-Jackson
nominated to serve on the U.S.
Supreme Court. **Page 10**



MEET YOUR
VENDOR:
**TABITHA
LUDWIG,**
PAGE 3

GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.



Photo credit: Nikki Williams

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@groundcovernews, include ver

World peace on April 1st!



KEN PARKS
Groundcover vendor No. 490

April Fools. Reality often surprises me by being quite different from what I had hoped. In October 1962, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, I committed to justice, peace and freedom in the belief that we could find the path and make definite progress. Not old enough to vote, I nevertheless supported Lyndon Johnson, the peace candidate, versus Barry Goldwater, the war candidate. So once again in 2022 we pay tribute to the saying made famous by Winston Churchill in 1948, "Those who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it."

Winston was promoting the Cold War. Now we have the Colder War with full spectrum galactic domination on the agenda. Are we ready to learn yet?

I once thought that if you worked hard, produced good quality results, and met the deadline, that financial rewards would happen. So after working double shifts most days and eight hours on Sunday, passing inspection and meeting deadlines for some months, we completed the painting, wall coverings and textured ceilings of a Courtyard by Marriott. I got the April Fools of my life when I discovered I was deeply in debt.

Everything has a context. Our ignorance of the context, in this case the market forces of the Reagan recession, and my commitment to run a union shop in a lowest bidder war was a recipe for disaster. When the lowest bidder economy dominates, everyone loses except the ruling class who plays capital flow for maximum profit. Non-union shops can bid lower so the working class and small businesses suffer. My debt was between \$30,000 and \$40,000 in mid-1980s dollars. Imagine the shock. As one worker commented, "You did not fail for lack of trying!"

I went to see Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche, a good spiritual friend, and finished my story with, "You'd think that if you work really hard at least some of your expectations would be met."

He looked at me in the kindest way and said, "Of all the causes of events your expectations are like a drop in the ocean."

"He paused, then added, "But remember this, you had very good relations with your workers, a rare thing now, and that is very important."

I remember this well because I had not mentioned to him the many painters who wanted to work for/with me as someone with a good reputation among union painters.

Unfortunately I was a debt slave. As the Kentucky boys say, "I can't die

truths to be self evident." These words from the Declaration of Independence and their derivation from Natural Law, as understood in the Age of Reason, should be studied regularly to see the context of current events. The United States of America was born from the original America of the Caribbean, both in the context of Turtle Island whose roots go back to life evolving from the sea onto land.

The current civil war about science and compliance will only be resolved if we find some common ground which means basic research. What are your assumptions, or more precisely your hypothesis? How is the experiment going? Did you come up with a theory? How is that working out in practice?

Even the theory of evolution is evolving. My theory is that intelligent design is inseparable from reality, the ultimate commons beyond conception, measurement or commodification. As Nietzsche said,

"Battle not with monsters lest you become one and if you gaze into the abyss, the abyss gazes also into you."

I like the word void as I learned it from the teachings on the song "The Clear Light Of The Void" - if you welcome the Void, the Clear Light will appear.

"Black Elk Speaks" is a landmark book of the 20th Century. It was written by John G. Neihardt from the oral transmission in Oglala Lakota. First published in 1932, a fourth edition was prepared in 2014 after the 1961 and 1972 editions sold 900,000 copies. This book was one of many stages of the path that prepared me to meet the Tibetans, go to Standing Rock, experience Water Ceremony and continue the struggle in the era of sarscovid2, neoliberal imperialism and the financialization of everything, first globally then galactically.

Contentment. When you get a taste of that, it is too easy to want more. You want to own it and it disappears. Our larger context appears to be ignorance and our experiences of peace are too short. Learning a natural breath in stillness and in motion is a lifetime practice. We seek a more complete context that is good soil for simple effortless awareness. As is taught, "Rest in the all good expanse of primordial purity until it is natural and the breath is not a big deal."

How could something so simple be so rare? We have much to learn about learning. When knowledge is plentiful and wisdom is rare, we manifest the situation common in this world and its fixation on appearances. Confusion and conflict become the standard as we go from one crisis to another, often with several running at the same time.

Basic research means testing your theory in the face of new evidence, experience included, and a willingness to change assumptions in order to integrate knowledge and wisdom

as we learn how things really are. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." Maybe Jesus and Buddha are brothers, maybe Marx is the modern disciple and we need the advice of the Grandmothers to respect Mother Earth and quit playing bad April Fools jokes on ourselves.

We can begin by following the Poor People's Campaign's online reading of Martin Luther King's "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence" on April 4th and the Earth Day celebrations organized by Ann Arbor Community Commons. Look for more Earth Day details in the next edition of Groundcover News. Take a breath, feel your power and take the next step towards the freedom that benefits all beings without exception. The soil is a living being. Walk gently with the confidence that is the bigger context than the fear and anxiety of the current culture. The struggle for freedom and dignity is good.

Will he survive

CHRISTOPHER ELLIS
Groundcover vendor No. 483

Their arms were raised
to the sky
stumbled out the
trench
in crumbled uniforms...

In the whole immense
Russia

a

single

tall

black

...

Soldier.

MAP's annual event back in person

MICHIGAN ABILITY PARTNERS

Michigan Ability Partners (MAP) is excited to host Another Chance to Bloom, MAP's Annual Event, on Friday, April 22, at Weber's Inn. This will be MAP's first in-person annual event since 2019, and will have live music, an exciting raffle, silent auction and program showcasing amazing stories of success.

This spring-themed event symbolizes MAP's mission to help give veterans and people who have disabilities a chance to bloom by

helping them through their self-directed path to self-sufficiency. MAP helps their clients with housing, vocational, and payee services throughout Washtenaw, Jackson, Wayne, Monroe, and Livingston counties. All revenue from this event goes directly back to the agency's programs and services.

Another Chance to Bloom will be from 6-8 p.m. in Weber's Grand Ballroom, located at 3050 Jackson Rd, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$100 each and will include 2 drink vouchers, along with heavy hors d'oeuvres. Tickets can be purchased at www.

mapagency.org/events. For more information, email info@mapagency.org.



What's Happening at the Ann Arbor District Library

Open 10am-8pm Daily

Browse our shelves full of books, movies, CDs, art prints, musical instruments, board games, and more seven days a week. Study and meeting rooms are open at all five locations. Learn more at AADL.org!

Tax Forms at AADL

AADL provides free tax forms in English and Spanish at all locations. Get your Federal 1040 form and instructions in English and Spanish, the MI 1040 booklet with form and instructions, and the MI Home Heating Credit (MI 1040CR-7).

Material for the Blind and Print Disabled

Do you know someone who is unable to read standard type print, is unable to hold a book in their hands, or has dyslexia? They may be eligible for services from the Washtenaw Library for the Blind and Print Disabled. Learn more at AADL.org/WLBD

F E A T U R E E V E N T



Arabiqa with Karim Nagi
Weds., April 13 at 6:30pm
Downtown Library

Arabiqa shares music & dance from around the Arab world. Performer Karim Nagi leads this interactive performance, showing multiple instruments, participatory dance styles, costumes, geography and language. This family-oriented community event will help everyone enjoy the beautiful culture of the Arab world.

The City of Ann Arbor Housing and Human Services Advisory Board invites you to

AFFORDABLE HOUSING EDUCATION SERIES



WHEN

Second Thursday of the month at 6:30pm

*The series will take place at the beginning of the board's regularly scheduled meetings

WHERE

Zoom: bit.ly/Housing-Ed | Passcode: 934493

JANUARY 13 | HISTORY OF PUBLIC AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING - RACIST HISTORY AND ONGOING IMPACTS

FEBRUARY 10 | LOCAL MARKET DISCUSSION - U OF M'S IMPACT ON HOUSING MARKET AND CHALLENGES FOR BUSINESSES

MARCH 10 | AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP MODELS

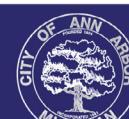
APRIL 14 | SUSTAINABILITY, DENSITY, PLANNING, AND ZONING

MAY 12 | AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

JUNE 9 | AFFORDABLE HOUSING FINANCING (PART I)

JULY 14 | AFFORDABLE HOUSING FINANCING (PART II)

For more information, visit the Affordable Housing Education Series webpage
<http://bit.ly/AA-housing-ed>



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Collaborative solutions for a promising future

U-M social work students demand paid placements

HASNA KAZI
Payment4Placements

The University of Michigan's Masters of Social Work (MSW) program is impoverishing social work graduate students. With an annual in-state tuition of \$45,000 plus living expenses, the University is forcing hundreds of social work graduate students into untenable amounts of student debt, despite the fact that MSW graduates barely earn \$40,000 annual salaries upon graduation.

Although the University has a \$17 billion endowment, which is larger than the GDP of at least 90 countries, the administration chooses not to pay its 438 social work graduate students for their required field work. The university's refusal to pay social workers for their labor compounds the student debt crisis, exacerbates the poverty many social work graduate students experience, and contributes to the racial and economic segregation of the University's program and the social work profession more broadly.

Social work students are essential to our local economy. Over 550 field site organizations depend on us to keep functioning. We are essential in the medically under-resourced area of Southeastern Michigan, where we act as therapists, political aides, hospital staff and nonprofit workers. Meanwhile, U-M benefits greatly from the School of Social Work's prestigious reputation, massive alumni network and high tuition. We are, according to U.S. News and World Report, the #1 Best School for Social Work.

On the ground, it's normalized for my colleagues to live on food stamps

and housing vouchers, and work 40-hour jobs on top of full-time schoolwork to pay the bills. Some of my colleagues are living paycheck to paycheck. One student shares, "I had to take out loans in order to afford living expenses and basic necessities. I have to squeeze in another job on nights and weekends in addition to 24 hours a week at my field placement and barely make enough to get by."

Another student shares their journey throughout the MSW Program: "Trying to balance 2-3 days of fieldwork, one or more part-time jobs, a full class load, homework/group projects, other required responsibilities and basic human needs (sleep, cooking, etc.) was absolutely devastating to my overall health and wellness (physically, emotionally, financially) while in the program and left me severely burnt out — something I think I'm still recovering from years after graduation."

This directly opposes the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics — which acknowledges the dignity and worth of each person — and the University's purported commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. This discriminatory policy excludes poor and working-class students from pursuing social work education at the University of Michigan at a time when the social work economy is rapidly expanding. By refusing to pay students for their mandatory field labor, the University of Michigan's School of Social Work is actively supporting racial and economic inequality and creating poverty.

As an MSW student says, "Our field needs to do a better job of supporting its incoming social workers. It warns

of burnout, but shaped us in an environment where it's expected to sacrifice our best choice of placement or the program in general because of the inability to survive on zero income. How are we expected to demand our worth when the university taught us to work for free?"

Over 70% of our student body signed a petition in support of our school forming a task force to determine how it will compensate social work students moving forward. We hear stories of students struggling with debt, living expenses and tuition, demonstrating that my colleagues urgently need more income through compensated field labor.

Since its inception in the fall of 2021, Payment 4 Placements (P4P) has grown from a conversation between a few students into a national movement, with the University of Michigan chapter leading the way. We currently have 10 other active chapters in eight states, including Oakland University and Wayne State University.

We call on other schools to join us in these efforts by starting conversations about the unpaid labor in their field internships at their social work programs.

At this time, the P4P petition resulted in P4P and U-M administration establishing a Joint Task Force on Stipends, which will hold its first session soon. For field students at the University of Michigan and across the country, financial jeopardy is the price of admission. The current system is unsustainable. We believe that the University of Michigan has a historic opportunity to lead the way in putting an end to the unjust prac-



Arie Davey, social work union student representative, emphasized to the crowd in the U-M Diag that this issue is a pay gap of feminized labor at the university.

tice of unpaid field work.

In addition to establishing the task force, P4P has been endorsed on Twitter by Pay Our Interns, "the nation's leading organization fighting to ensure all students have equitable access to professional career paths through the implementation of paid internships countrywide — especially students from historically excluded communities."

This is a national struggle. Over 15 universities in over 10 states have responded to our call to demand payment for the essential work we do in field internships. There are at least three NASW state chapters forming committees to investigate better student support. This is a crisis that must be addressed now!



At 10:30 a.m. on March 21, over eighty social worked students walked out of class in protest of their unpaid field placements. They gathered in the U-M Diag for a rally where multiple students spoke. Photo credits: Marisa Launstein.



Forest defenders stop work at proposed luxury development

A new front on the fight for affordable housing and sustainable communities has opened in Ann Arbor. In recent days, two peaceful direct actions against the proposed Concord Pines luxury development on 660 Earhart Rd have resulted in work stoppages and two arrests. The development would create 57 single-family luxury homes on the wooded site just north of Concordia College. The group behind the actions, FIGHT Concord Pines, opposes the creation of new luxury homes in the midst of Washtenaw County's affordable housing crisis and particularly objects to the destruction of hundreds of landmark trees — large, old, historical trees — in order to create these homes.

On the morning of Friday, March 25, an intrepid forest protector identifying herself as Osprey locked down to a mulcher for approximately 12 hours and consequently prevented construction from starting. The forest defender refused to unclip when the developers arrived mid-morning, then left flummoxed.

"I'm doing this because the people of Washtenaw County deserve affordable housing, not more homes for rich people," said Osprey, as she stood locked to the mulcher. "Ann Arbor is one of the most economically segregated cities in the country, yet somehow companies like Toll Brothers think that we still need luxury homes instead of affordable housing. We have done all of the legal things we can to stop this development from happening, and time and time again City Council has said their hands are tied. I grew up here; I know the birds, the frogs, the salamanders like the back of my hand. I'm not going to stand by and let these beautiful old trees be destroyed for luxury homes without doing what I can to stop it."

The lockdown was accompanied by a crowd of supporters with pizza, music and signs condemning the project. Over the course of the day, many neighbors stopped by to offer supportive words and sometimes coats and snacks. At dusk, the forest defender unclipped, ending the day of action with no arrests.

The following Monday, March 28, the party-like atmosphere was no more. Two more forest defenders, identifying themselves as Sam and Peatmoss, locked down to the mulcher in the frigid early morning. This time, workers arrived and rather than sitting in their trucks to enjoy some paid time off, they confronted the forest protectors.

A contractor employed by William J. Lang Land Clearing Inc., threatened



TEGWYN JOHN
Groundcover contributor

the pair as they sat chained to the mulcher. The worker said he would hurt them if they did not move. He then got into the cab and turned on the machine, though he did not engage the mulching attachment which would have mangled or killed the forest defenders.

The Ann Arbor Police Department arrived and issued a dispersal order, forcing the small group of supporters across the street. They then removed the blankets which were wrapped around the protesters, leaving them exposed to the 18 degree air. The blankets were not returned until a local government official arrived. A member of the support group had to request that the police call for medical support, to prevent hypothermia.

Firefighters arrived at the scene and the extraction effort began. First they unsuccessfully used bolt cutters to attempt to cut the chains, causing the forest defenders to cry out in pain. Then the firefighters brought out an angle grinder and cut the steel lock-boxes protecting the protesters' hands. Around 11 a.m., Sam and Peatmoss were forcibly removed from the mulcher by the AAPD and arrested. Another day of work was prevented and lessons were learned which will be valuable in the ongoing struggle.

This development stands starkly against a background of ongoing local and global crises. Rising rents and stagnating wages have forced many workers out of Ann Arbor, often to Ypsilanti where they inadvertently drive up rent prices and displace more people. Those who cannot afford to rent anywhere near where they work are pushed into homelessness, staying at the overcrowded and underfunded Delonis shelter or camping out of sight.

This land was traditionally stewarded by the Wyandot and the Bodewadmi peoples, many of whom waged immense resistance battles against their forced removal to Kansas and Oklahoma in the 1800s. Despite evidence of nearby burial mounds and remains in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti,



Above: FIGHT Concord Pines forest defenders try to stay warm during the direct action March 25. **Below:** Protest banner draped across the mulcher designated to begin site construction at Concord Pines. Photo credits: Nikki Williams.

the Concord Pines site plan does not provide any details on their plans to involve the Bodewadmi or Wyandot if remains, cultural artifacts or other significant items are discovered at the site.

The proposed Concord Pines development is an example of the kind of low-density, energy-intensive, cost-prohibitive housing that Ann Arbor can literally no longer afford — not if it wants to leave intact ecosystems and communities for future generations' health and wellbeing. There is no time left to stop the climate crisis by appealing to City Council or other weak-willed government bodies. Action must be taken to stop the destruction of our planet.



St. Francis invites you
to come and meet Christ Jesus
who loves each one of us and who
is really present here to save us.

*"If God were your Father, you would love me,
for I came from God and am here;
I did not come on my own, but he sent me."
+ Christ Jesus (John 8:42)*

Mass Times:
Saturday Vigil 5 pm & 7 pm (español);
Sunday 8:30am, 10:30am, 12:30pm;
Daily Mon-Fri at 9:15am; Thurs Mass is
followed by a Holy Hour.

Spanish: stfrancisa2.com/misa
English: stfrancisa2.com/mass

Judge Ketanji Brown-Jackson nominated to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court: first Black woman ever!

"I rejected the notion that my race or sex would bar my success in life."

— First Black Federal Judge, Constance Baker Motley of the New York Southern District

The White House website announced on February 25, 2022, that President Biden nominated Judge Ketanji Brown-Jackson to become the 116th Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court. This announcement follows the formal retirement of Associate Justice Stephen Breyer effective at the end of the term. Justice Breyer has served on the Supreme Court for about three decades. He was a mentor to Judge Jackson when she was a young lawyer, and subsequently selected her as one of his Supreme Court clerks.

Judge Jackson's first and second names are West African. When she was born in 1970, her father and mother reached out to her aunt who was serving in Africa in the Peace Corps and asked for appropriate names for the newly born baby. The aunt proudly suggested "Ketanji" and "Onyeka."

Judge Jackson was born in Washington, D.C. and grew up in Miami, Fla. Her parents attended segregated primary schools and historically Black colleges and universities. Both started their careers as public school teachers and became leaders and administrators in the Miami-Dade Public School System.

When Judge Jackson was in preschool, her father attended law school. In a 2017 lecture, Judge Jackson traced her love of the law back to sitting next to her father in their apartment as he tackled his law school homework — reading cases and preparing for Socratic questioning — while she undertook her preschool homework — coloring books. Judge Jackson stood out as a high achiever throughout her childhood. She was a speech and debate star who was elected "Mayor" of Palmetto Junior High and student body president of Miami Palmetto Senior High School.

But like many Black women, Judge Jackson still faced naysayers. When Judge Jackson told her high school guidance counselor she wanted to attend Harvard, the guidance counselor warned her not to set her "sights so high." That did not stop Judge Jackson. She graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University, then attended Harvard Law School, where she graduated cum laude and was editor of the "Harvard Law Review."

The White House outlined the following career experience for Judge Ketanji Onyeka Brown-Jackson: Judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C.



WILL SHAKESPEARE
Groundcover vendor No. 258

Legal and Education Fund can never go unnoticed. Ending the "Separate but Equal" doctrine has paved the way for future generations of young Americans to dream big because there would be no limit to the possibilities of their future. As a kid, Judge Jackson dreamed about becoming a lawyer and a judge.

Our favorite "Dreamer in Chief," Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., gave the "Mountaintop Speech" on a rainy night in Memphis, April 3, 1968. He was assassinated the next day. Dr. King said prophetically, "...Well I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now. I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I am not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And he

has allowed me to go to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I have seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the lord." Good Luck to Judge Ketanji Brown-Jackson!!!

Author's note: The Senate Judiciary Committee held formal confirmation hearings for Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson from Monday, March 21 to Thursday March 24. On Monday, March 27, the Senate Judiciary Chairman announced that the Senate Panel would vote on April 4 to send the nomination to the full Senate. The Senate Majority Leader, Chuck Schumer, said that he would schedule a vote for the Supreme Court Nominee before April 8, when Congress adjourns for the Easter Break.

Circuit; Judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia; Vice Chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission; Public Defender; and Supreme Court Clerk.

Throughout her education and legal career, Judge Jackson has been a role model and a source of inspiration. During her prepared speech at the White House on February 25, 2022, Judge Jackson expressed her gratitude to "the greatest nation in the world," her family, the President and the Vice President. She paid tribute to the deceased Judge Constance Baker Motley — the first Black female federal judge.

Judge Motley once said, "There appears to be no limit as to how far the women's revolution will take us." Before her judicial appointment, Judge Motley worked closely with notable NAACP attorneys such as Thurgood Marshall and Derreck Bell to end segregation, discrimination and racism. As a key litigator and legal strategist, Judge Motley was involved in landmark civil rights cases, including the Montgomery bus boycott, the freedom riders, the Meredith v. University of Alabama case, and the fight to release Reverend/Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. from a Birmingham, Ala. jail.

The American struggles for racial equality, racial justice and women's rights are not lost on Judge Jackson. She has a heightened sense of awareness about the challenges of civil rights and equal justice under law. She knew that Professor Derreck Bell left his position as Dean of The University of Oregon Law School because they failed to hire a qualified Asian-American female attorney to join the Law faculty. Professor Bell took a leave of absence from Harvard because its law school said that they were unable to find a qualified Black woman to join the tenure-track faculty in the early 1990s. It took a few more years before Harvard hired Lani Guinier, a law professor at The University of Pennsylvania, to join the Harvard Law faculty.

The exceptional legal fight by Thurgood Marshall on behalf of the NAACP

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Bethlehem-ucc.org facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2
Bethlehem Church is home of the Groundcover office



APRIL 2022 EVENTS AT BETHLEHEM

In person events are just starting to resume at BUCC. We ask that you visit the church website at: bethlehem-ucc.org for the most up-to-date calendar and event information.



Sunday Worship Time
10:00 am In-person
and via Live Stream and
Radio Broadcast

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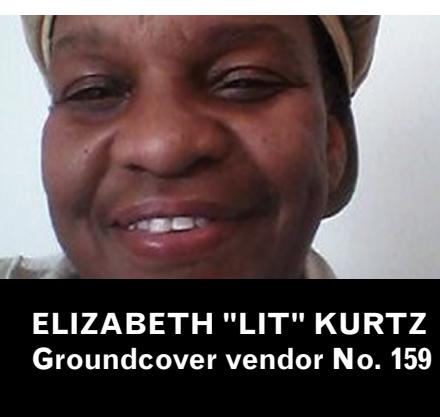
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Kalamazoo family evicted by nonprofit agency



ELIZABETH "LIT" KURTZ
Groundcover vendor No. 159

There is little question that nonprofit agencies consist of boards that are too often disconnected from the people they serve. The optics alone reveal the divide. If one were only to juxtapose images of board members with the average homeless person the stark difference would become even more apparent.

For instance, those who make up many nonprofit boards that serve the homeless population often live in comfortable dwellings with amenities of which a homeless person can only dream. Many enjoy lifestyles that an upper middle class income affords.

Within a month, the nonprofit was able to evict the family, leading to MLive's article, "Family evicted in freezing winter after court battle with nonprofit landlord." A disabled mother and her two sons were forced to scramble to find somewhere to be as the outside temperatures in Michigan plummeted below single digits.

They found a motel with poor plumbing, dirty mattresses and no cooking facilities (not even a microwave) which cost them nearly \$2,000 a month to reside in. The hotel costs ate away at the money Issa Smith, the head of the family, had saved to purchase a home.

Meanwhile, Artley, the head of the Public Housing Commission in Kalamazoo, resigned his position. But the damage is still done.

Nonprofit organizations have long

This scenario plays itself out in homeless nonprofit boards across America, but a case in Kalamazoo, Michigan, startlingly reveals how this disconnect can impact a family.

On January 5, 2022, MLive of Kalamazoo ran the story of an impending eviction. What made the eviction so unusual was that it was being done by the very nonprofit responsible for helping the family, all of whom are

disabled.

Within a month, the nonprofit was able to evict the family, leading to MLive's article, "Family evicted in freezing winter after court battle with nonprofit landlord." A disabled mother and her two sons were forced to scramble to find somewhere to be as the outside temperatures in Michigan plummeted below single digits.

Despite there being a variety of non-

profits for the homeless in the Kalamazoo area, none were able to help her.

One notable one was Housing

Resources, Inc., who according to the

MLive article is working to provide

pods for homeless people living in

the elements.

Waiting for a nonprofit to fill this

urgent need is clearly not an option.

To find out more about this family's

situation and other pressing homeless

issues, you can visit my Instagram,

"lits.talk" or find me on Spotify under

"Lits Talk!"

Email: litshome1@gmail.com

stunned. I didn't know what to do at that point, so I stayed to wait in the cold.

When the ambulance arrived after a couple minutes and took me to the ER at U-M, the hospital staff was understandably annoyed by the officer's decision. It was the height of the omicron surge, and they had enough to deal with. It was around 9 p.m. by that point — two hours of wasted time and counting. I was upset and insisted that I be released from the hospital to go home, but they took all my clothes, my wheelchair(!), and everything else I had but my phone. I think they were afraid I was simply going to leave. I think they were also hesitant to believe that I was all there mentally, again profiling me as someone disabled and with a speech impediment.

I sat there in a hospital gown and called a friend who happens to be a professor at the University of Michigan, thinking someone at the hospital

see CAB page 11 ➔

An ambulance is no substitute for a cab!

A DISAPPOINTED ANN ARBOR RESIDENT

On Sunday, January 9, I missed the last bus from the Blake Transit Center to my neighborhood by one minute. It was now 6:46 pm and the temperature was in the teens that evening, not accounting for the wind chill. In the summertime I wheel home from the Blake all the time. I enjoy just thinking on my journey — it's peaceful. But I knew that with the cold that evening, wheeling the 3.9 miles home wasn't a safe option.

I called AAATA's FlexRide, but they were already fully booked for the night. I don't have the Uber or Lyft app (they can't consistently accommodate wheelchairs), and I knew from past experience that the one local taxi company, Blue Cab, tended to respond much more rapidly to businesses than individuals.

Looking for an open business nearby, I decided to go to Ruth's Chris Steak House to ask them to help me get

a ride home. Little did I know that I was about to launch a six-hour saga of profiling, mistreatment and waste of thousands of dollars of taxpayer money.

The woman at the front said she would help and disappeared for several minutes. She came back out but didn't say anything, so after about five minutes I asked, and she told me, "They'll be here in ten minutes."

She didn't say who. A bit later, I see a police car arrive, and I think to myself, "I wonder who the sorry soul is that he's here for." I came to find out that that sorry soul was me!

I don't know what exactly made the restaurant call the police rather than a cab. The fact that I am in a wheelchair? That I have a speech impediment? That I was dressed in all black? That my jacket is worn? That I had had a few drinks that afternoon? Even if I had been intoxicated, calling a cab to help someone intoxicated get home safely should be routine for a bar and restaurant. I wasn't even asking them to pay

for it.

When the police officer came up to me, he told me to come outside to talk.

I said that I just needed to get home.

He told me that if there were more officers available, he could call one to take me, but that that evening there weren't.

He refused to call a cab, instead saying he would call an ambulance, and the hospital could figure things out!

I pointed out that it's not the hospital's responsibility, and all I wanted to do

was go home.

The officer got back in his car to call, and I went back into the restaurant to stay warm. The manager at the front immediately went outside to the officer to ask him to make me wait outside. When I asked if she would want to be waiting outside in that cold, her condescending reply was that she wouldn't mind waiting out in the cold herself, but that she was busy and had to work. So I went back outside with the officer. The officer simply told me that the ambulance was on its way, then got back in his car and left. I was



Oscar nominated short documentaries offer poignant, relevant messages for our times

ANDRE VASHER
Groundcover contributor

A movie theater in the heart of downtown should contribute a sense of community, along the lines of a corner tavern combined with the thought-provoking content of a library. Ann Arbor's Michigan Theater consistently delivers on both promises.

During the Oscars build-up, viewers can sample this year's short films nominated in the Animation, Live Action and Documentary categories. Braving a chilly winter evening I took in the Short Films Documentaries — and feel incredibly lucky to have absorbed five high quality films. Each dealt with a quite different subject while taking divergent approaches to the topics they addressed. All the content was truly relevant for our challenging times with compelling messages and succinct story telling.

When We Were Bullies

Most documentaries don't offer the confession of their director, but "When We Were Bullies" starts out that way. Jay Rosenblatt began making a documentary about boys and childhood cruelty and in a moment of introspection recalled his major role in an unfortunate bullying incident in his fifth-grade class.

Digging into the event after many years have passed, he tracks down as many old classmates as possible, getting their hot take on the playground trauma. Rosenblatt even goes to great lengths to find and interview their teacher who may (or may not) have played a supporting role in the event.

The nominated short documentaries for 2022 were "Audible," "When We Were Bullies," "Three Songs for Benazir," "Lead Me Home" and "The Queen of Basketball." Watched sequentially the films ran for almost three hours, but this viewer lost all track of time once the lights dimmed.

Audible

Matt Ogens and Geoff McLean capture the heightened emotions and mood swings of a high school football team mid-season. Highlighted in this film is a senior captain. His motivational sideline speeches and halting homecoming invitation get an unusual delivery — in sign language.

Three Songs for Benazir

This film describes the trials of an Afghan man living in poverty who decides to enlist in the Afghan National Army. Elizabeth and Gulistan Mirzaei's documentary depicts the gritty

living conditions and daily struggle to survive in a country under siege by both the U.S. Army and the Taliban.

Shaista, a young man who — newly married to Benazir and living in a camp for displaced persons in Kabul — struggles to balance his dreams of joining the Afghan National Army with the responsibilities of starting a family.

This documentary enlightens more with images than dialogue. It encompasses overhead shots of American drones circling the camp, mangy dogs scrounging for scraps and dirty boys wrestling in the mud. Shaista never totally succumbs to his desperation to care for his family, managing to amuse his playful wife with songs he creates off the top of his head — even under the most discouraging conditions.

Lead Me Home

The opening scenes of "Lead Me Home" contrast homeless individuals readying tents on the sidewalk against the silhouettes of their wealthier neighbors turning down the dimmers in high rise apartments and condos. Welcome to homelessness in San Francisco, Seattle and Los Angeles.

Pedro Kos and Jon Shenk also pay attention to the words of their subjects as they interview several home-challenged people — from mothers to recovering addicts to the mentally ill. No-judging here. This film shows the disparity of the have and have-nots as well as the challenges homeless people face in getting government assistance.

The filmmakers offer no innovative solutions for this growing problem, especially in liberal cities in the West. They simply and vividly want to tell the stories of an often-unheard group of citizens in these United States.

The Queen of Basketball

When Shaquille O'Neal is listed as an executive producer of a documentary you suspect it will have a light touch.

Ben Proudfoot's film deftly portrays the basketball career of America's first female hoops superstar.

In the mid-seventies, just as Title IX ruled that men and women should have equal opportunities to play college sports, Lucia (Lucy) Stewart led a small Mississippi college to three national titles, scored the first basket in women's Olympic history in 1976, and was the first and only woman drafted by the men's National Basketball Association.

This amazing athlete reflects the humor and persona of her executive producer. Never humble but always funny, she bluntly shares her perspective on her basketball achievements along with mental health struggles. The happy conclusion is not the Olympic medal or championship banners Stewart won, but the high achieving children she produced as a mother and mentor in her hometown rural Mississippi.

My Pick to Win

While most eyes looked to the Best Picture announcement during the Oscar telecast, I watched the Short Films Documentary category with great anticipation. All these films are deserving winners in my mind. If forced to pick the best, I would go with "When We Were Bullies" because of its brutal honesty and the creative ways in which the director manipulated an old class photo and picture of his old school yard. Plus, the topic, like those in all these documentaries, was spot on. In the end, "The Queen of Basketball" won the Oscar for best documentary short.

Sudoku

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4							3	
1	2		4		6			
		1			2			
3	1			9	8			
8	7				9	5		
9		8			1		2	
4			2					
	3		7			9	5	
7							8	

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Dig In!

by Tracy Bennett

ACROSS

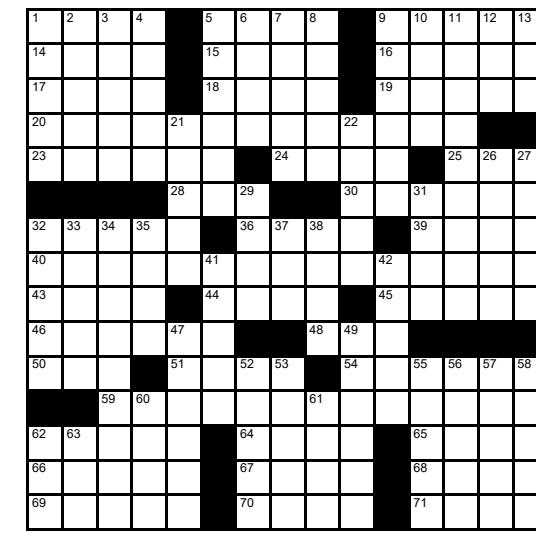
- 1 Big-city haze
- 5 Boutique
- 9 1990s entourage of friends
- 14 2011 Pixar film set in Mexico
- 15 Get by
- 16 Place for a pin
- 17 ___ no good
- 18 Was in the red, say
- 19 Starters, often
- 20 Start of a quip about daring and dining attributed to Jonathan Swift, Ben Franklin, Shirley Chisholm, King James and others
- 23 Not woke, in a way
- 24 Blind element
- 25 Dawning realization?
- 28 Flowering 70-Across
- 30 Unconvincing, as an excuse
- 32 Superhero costume pieces
- 36 Sleep
- 39 Courage in the belly
- 40 Part 2 of the quip
- 43 Winter Olympian's double or triple
- 44 Winter Olympian's double or triple
- 45 Mainframe expert, in brief
- 46 Family support group since 1951
- 48 Symbol of strength in a Rosie the Riveter poster
- 50 Sworn affirmation
- 51 Idiosyncrasy
- 52 Traffic calming feature in many a subdivision
- 53 Word with tag or beam
- 55 Archipelago components
- 56 Maker of Pong and Asteroids
- 57 One trying out for the Amazin' Blue, maybe

- 32 B equivalent
- 33 Garlicky topping
- 34 Like a take-charge individual
- 35 "College GameDay" broadcaster
- 37 Bill in a till
- 38 Author Émile
- 41 Frenzied state
- 42 "Diary of a ___ Kid"
- 47 Major Ukrainian port on the Black Sea
- 49 Novice

- 52 Leaning just a bit
- 53 Word with tag or beam
- 55 Archipelago components
- 56 Maker of Pong and Asteroids
- 57 One trying out for the Amazin' Blue, maybe

- 58 Undo a doode
- 60 Sign of things to come
- 61 Church area
- 62 Bellanira or Bloom, e.g.
- 63 What truth is said to be the first casualty of

- 64 Author Dinesen
- 65 Pop singer ___ Del Rey
- 66 Fixes the damn roads, say
- 67 Strauss of blue jeans fame
- 68 God of lusty love
- 69 Crisler Center, for one
- 70 One in an arbor
- 71 Foal's father



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DOWN

- 1 Go for a dive, maybe
- 2 Has a sad attitude
- 3 In base 8
- 4 Fowl not found in turducken
- 5 Two on a Kilwin's cone
- 6 Bay, say
- 7 Newsy pundit pieces
- 8 Use the bicycle lane, say
- 9 Tributary of the Missouri
- 10 Sworn affirmation
- 11 Traffic calming feature in many a subdivision
- 12 Mariner's realm
- 13 Stately 70-Across
- 21 Beauty's counterpart in a fairy tale
- 64 Author Dinesen
- 65 Pop singer ___ Del Rey
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CAB from page 9

might listen to her if she reassured them that I was mentally sound and should be released. But I was left alone for hours, so there wasn't really anyone for her to talk to, and I realized that testimony by someone with an unconfirmed identity over the phone probably wouldn't satisfy procedures for the hospital to release a patient.

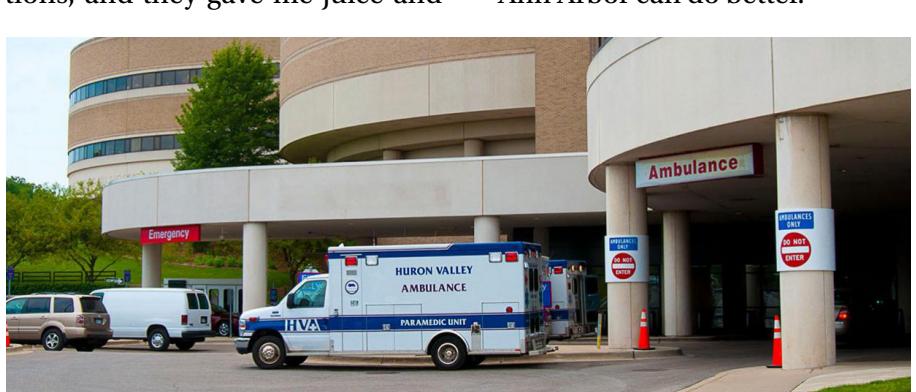
Thank goodness I had insurance. Between the ambulance and the hours in the hospital, Medicare sent \$1000 + \$1900 of taxpayers' money to the healthcare system for that night. The cab would have been less than \$20.

They never even formally examined me at the hospital, although several people came to ask me questions, and they gave me juice and

snacks. But when I got the insurance bill days later, I discovered to my surprise that I had been billed for a lab! I called U-M to ask what it was, and they told me it was a urinalysis! While I was at the hospital, I had told staff at some point that I needed to go to the bathroom — I couldn't go by myself without my wheelchair — and they had brought me a urination device. Evidently they used it to collect a sample without my knowledge.

I don't even know exactly how they finally decided to release me, three and a half hours later, around 12:30 a.m. Of course, when they discharged me, I still had to get home. They called a cab for me — this was all I had wanted from the beginning!

I finally got home at 1:00 a.m., six hours after the entire saga began. Ann Arbor can do better.



Sea salt chocolate chip cookies

ELIZABETH BAUMAN
Groundcover contributor

Ingredients:

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking soda
1/2 cup salted butter
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
1/3 cup + 2 tsp granulated sugar
1 large egg
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chips (more or less to your taste)
sea salt flakes
about 20 chocolate chips

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

Add flour and baking soda to a mixing bowl and whisk for 15 seconds to incorporate and make them fluffy.

To the bowl of a stand mixer, add softened butter and both sugars. Beat with paddle attachment for about 2

minutes, until mixture is smooth and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla, beat on LOW speed until combined.

Add flour, half the mixture at a time, beating on LOW speed until JUST combined after each addition. Don't overmix, or your cookies won't be soft and tender.

Add chocolate chips and stir together with a spoon. Chill for 30 minutes.

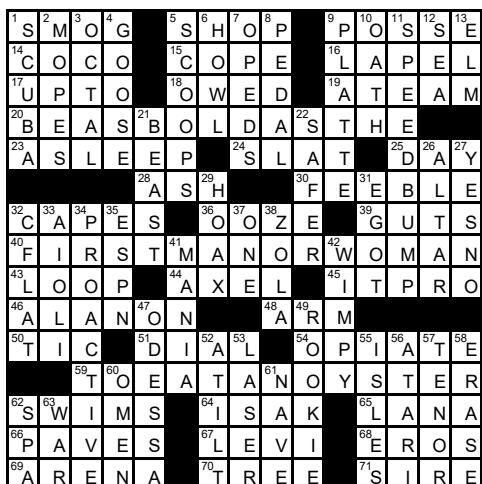
Use a large cookie scoop and scoop round balls of dough onto parchment paper about 2 inches apart.

Press a couple chocolate chips into the tops of the balls of dough, and bake about 10-12 minutes, or until edges are lightly golden brown and tops of cookies look a little underdone. (mine took 11 minutes).

Sprinkle top of baked cookies with some sea salt flakes. Allow cookies to cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer to a cooling rack to finish cooling. So yummy!

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

4	5	9	7	2	6	8	3	1
1	2	8	5	4	3	6	7	9
7	3	6	1	9	8	5	2	4
3	6	1	2	5	9	4	8	7
2	8	7	4	6	1	9	5	3
5	9	4	8	3	7	1	6	2
9	4	5	3	8	2	7	1	6
8	1	3	6	7	4	2	9	5
6	7	2	9	1	5	3	4	8



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